

REMARKS

In the outstanding Official Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-19 under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting over the claims of U.S. Patent No. 6,687,335.

As a preliminary matter, by the present response Applicants have amended the disclosure at page 1, lines 4-7. In particular, Applicants have amended the disclosure to revise the information regarding U.S. Patent Application No. 09/050,871 (i.e., by indicating the correct filing date, as well as the patent number and issue date).

Additionally, Applicants are filing a terminal disclaimer to disclaim the terminal part of any patent granted on the present application which would extend beyond the expiration of U.S. Patent No. 6,687,335. Applicants are filing the terminal disclaimer merely to remove any issue as to whether the claims of the above-identified application and those of U.S. Patent No. 6,687,335 in any way conflict. However, neither applicants nor the assignee intend to make any representation as to whether any obviousness-type double patenting rejection would be appropriate if the enclosed terminal disclaimer were not filed. The terminal disclaimer is being filed only to expedite the allowance of the pending claims.

Accordingly, at least for the above-mentioned reasons, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding objection to the specification

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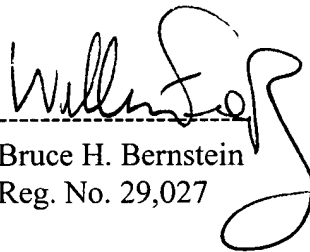
and the outstanding rejections of claims 1-19, as well as an indication of the allowability of all the claims now pending in due course.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Applicants believe that the present application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration of the rejections set forth in the outstanding Official Action and allowance of the present application and all the claims therein are respectfully requested.

Should there be any comments or questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
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